

My name is Judy Ginsberg. I am a former employee of AT&T/Lucent Technologies. I had worked in the Consumers Products division of the business. While I was working there I came across a cordless telephone that was wonderful for me as a hard of hearing consumer and I wanted to share this information with other hard of hearing people.

To prove my point I contacted the National Self Help for the Hard of Hearing people office and sent them a couple of phones to try. Meanwhile I persuaded my upper management to let me prove a point. They gave me one AT&T Phone Store (in Delray, Florida). There I had the store manager set up a display (the sign said "Hearing Aid Compatible Phones") all these phones were hearing aid compatible as was my favorite cordless phone. They charged the cordless phone (since this kind must be charged before using) and displayed them so any customer could make calls on them. In one month of this trail, this store tripled their sales. Not only was my upper management impressed but for the following 4 months they had zero returns on these phones.

My point is that we hearing aid users need to test the phones to make sure we can hear on them before we buy. It has become increasingly impossible to find anyplace that will let us do that. This has become more of a problem for me with my cell phones. Every two years when my contract is up once again I have to go exploring. I have reached the point that the only place I can go is to a Verizon store to try them out. Meanwhile the atmosphere is too noisy to be sure. I want to be allowed to go wherever I want to purchase a phone just as anyone else.

After many years of being unemployed I finally found a job. My new employer gives everyone a cell phone to keep in touch. The first model they gave me I couldn't hear well, the volume was too low. The second model gives off such an interference hum that it is the only thing I hear. I am currently stuck with this phone. I would like to be able to tell my employer what phone I could use. I do want to be able to keep my job and this job details to have clients call me.

I understand that 1/3 of the senior citizen population has hearing loss and more and more baby boomers are being diagnosed with a hearing loss.

Wouldn't it make sense to increase the places to go and test phones rather than decrease it?

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